

the Schools to Watch by the National Forum to Accelerate Middle-Grades Reform.

The School to Watch program was launched in 1999 to identify high-performing middle schools that serve as a model for other schools to watch across the Nation. These schools, like Canyon Middle School, demonstrate academic excellence, develop programs that respond to the sensitive needs of early adolescence, and provide students with high-quality teachers and resources to support students in their academic goals.

This week, at the Ninth Annual Schools to Watch Conference, Canyon Middle School will be presented with this prestigious award. Canyon Middle School will be represented by attendance clerk Adria Anderson-Kelly, Assistant Principal Juan Flores, Assistant Principal Annie Flores-Aikey, math and science teacher Gregory Matawaran, math and science teacher Liz Oettel, and special education teacher Cheryll Rosales.

I look forward to congratulating the group from Canyon Middle School this Thursday when they visit my office, and I look forward to hearing more details about how more schools can follow their example of excellence.

Congratulations again to the teachers, administrators, parents, and students that helped Canyon Middle School achieve this award. You make me and your congressional district very proud.

□ 1210

IN MEMORY OF STEVE LAFRANCE

(Mr. COTTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COTTON. Today, I honor the memory of my constituent Steve LaFrance who passed away earlier this month. Steve was a pillar of the Pine Bluff community, and really all of Arkansas.

A pharmacist by training, he started his business in 1968 with a single pharmacy in Gibson's Department Store in Pine Bluff. From that modest start, Steve built USA Drug over 44 years into the largest privately owned chain of drugstores in the country.

Steve's motto, like my own dad's, was "do the right thing." It was the foundation of his success. All who knew him and all who worked with Steve, whether employees, customers, vendors, and even competitors, respected not only his business acumen, but especially his sense of fair play, passion, and loyalty.

Even more than a businessman, though, Steve was a devoted family man, proud father of four children, seven grandkids, and the loving husband of Linda, his wife of 44 years. He was also a deeply faithful Christian man who walked in the path of the Lord and now walks with Him.

On behalf of all Arkansans and the United States Congress, I wish to express my deepest condolences to him.

Like you, we all miss "Big Steve," and we were all enriched by having our lives touched by him.

PROTECTING THE BALLOT BOX FROM DISCRIMINATION

(Mr. BARROW of Georgia asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARROW of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my disappointment in the Supreme Court's decision striking down the preclearance provisions of the Voting Rights Act.

Mr. Speaker, making sure that our election laws are fair is the most important job in a democracy because the right to vote is the right on which everything else depends. Countless Americans have marched for it, suffered for it, and shed their blood for it.

In Georgia, one of the greatest proponents of the Voting Rights Act, our colleague, Congressman JOHN LEWIS, knows all too well the price that's been paid to make sure that election laws are not only open but fair to all concerned.

We can't go back to the days when majorities can pass laws that limit or diminish the voting strength of minorities. I'm calling on my colleagues in Congress, Republicans and Democrats, not to let this issue die. We need to do what is right and ensure, once and for all, that folks aren't discriminated against at the ballot box.

SECURING OUR FUTURE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, House Republicans have a plan to create jobs, grow our economy, and secure our future for all Americans. And we're doing it by expanding opportunity, not expanding government.

We're holding government accountable to the hardworking taxpayers of this country.

We're reining in runaway Washington spending that's driving up our national debt.

We're going to reform our Tax Code to make it fairer and simpler for all Americans.

We are promoting an all-of-the-above, all-American energy strategy that will create jobs, lower energy costs, and strengthen our national security.

These are the commonsense solutions that the American people deserve, Mr. Speaker. It's not fair that Washington Democrats keep offering up only more spending and political games. Real solutions to real problems, that's the House Republican commitment.

STUDENT LOANS

(Ms. KELLY of Illinois asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. KELLY of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of 7 million students with subsidized student loans to

urge my colleagues in Congress to come together to prevent student loan rates from doubling on July 1.

The cost of a college degree has increased by more than 1,000 percent in the last 30 years. Two-thirds of college seniors who graduated in 2011 had an average student loan debt of \$26,000 per borrower. As the July 1 deadline approaches, America's total student loan debt already tops \$1.1 trillion.

We're a nation that invests in our future, and that means investing in our kids. Mounting student debt is handicapping a generation of graduates who already face a tough job market. This debt is forcing them to put off key milestones like buying a home and starting a family. This delay in the American Dream will diminish our Nation's economic development.

Congress has come to the aid of our banks and worked to promote industry. Now it's time to step up for our students by preserving college affordability and keeping the American Dream within reach.

Let's stand together to keep Federal student loan rates down. I urge my colleagues to act now.

THE WAR ON COAL

(Mrs. BLACKBURN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. BLACKBURN. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor to share a quote with my colleagues to make them aware of this. It is from Daniel Schrag. He is the White House adviser on climate change, and this was reported in The New York Times. Quite frankly, I find this quote baffling. Here it is:

The one thing the President really needs to do now is to begin the process of shutting down the conventional coal plants. Politically, the White House is hesitant to say that we're having a war on coal. On the other hand, a war on coal is exactly what's needed.

That was Mr. Schrag, the White House adviser on climate change.

Mr. Speaker, I highlight this with my colleagues in this House right now because a war on coal is a war on jobs; a war on jobs, is a war on the American worker.

I have never met anybody that wants to pay more for electric power generation, but the actions of this administration, the actions of the President choosing to circumvent Congress and implement these is costing us 500,000 jobs.

PTSD AWARENESS DAY

(Ms. GABBARD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, I'm rising today to recognize Posttraumatic Stress Awareness Day and so that we can honor our men and women in uniform who have so bravely served our